United Nations A/S-21/PV.1

General Assembly
Twenty-first Special Session

Official Records

1st plenary meeting
Wednesday, 30 June 1999, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Opertti ..... (Uruguay)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Opening of the session by the Chairman of the delegation of Uruguay

The Temporary President (*spoke in Spanish*): I declare open the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly.

Item 2 of the provisional agenda

Minute of silent prayer or meditation

The Temporary President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now invite representatives to stand and observe one minute of silent prayer or meditation.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silent prayer or meditation.

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/S-21/3)

The Temporary President (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like, in keeping with the established practice, to invite the attention of the General Assembly to document A/S-21/3, which contains a letter addressed to the President of the General Assembly from the Secretary-General in which he informs the Assembly that 32 Member States are in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the United Nations within the terms of Article 19 of the Charter.

I should like to remind delegations that, under Article 19 of the Charter,

> "A Member of the United Nations which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the Organization shall have no vote in the General Assembly if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the preceding two full years."

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of the information contained in document A/S-21/3?

It was so decided.

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

Credentials of representatives to the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly

(a) Appointment of the members of the Credentials Committee

The Temporary President (*spoke in Spanish*): Rule 28 of the rules of procedure provides that the General Assembly, at the beginning of each session, shall appoint, on the proposal of the President, a Credentials Committee consisting of nine members.

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This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one month of the date of the meeting*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

In accordance with precedents, and as recommended by the Commission on Population and Development acting as the preparatory committee for the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly, the Credentials Committee of the twenty-first special session should have the same membership as that of the fifty-third regular session of the General Assembly — namely China, Fiji, Jamaica, Mali, New Zealand, the Russian Federation, the United States of America, Venezuela and Zimbabwe.

If there is no objection, I shall consider the Credentials Committee constituted accordingly.

It was so decided.

The Temporary President (*spoke in Spanish*): In this connection, I draw the attention of the members of the Assembly to a note verbale from the Secretary-General, dated 27 May 1999, in which it was stated that credentials should be issued for all representatives to the special session, in accordance with rule 27 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. I would therefore urge those members that have not yet done so to submit the credentials of their representatives to the Secretary-General as soon as possible.

Item 4 of the provisional agenda

Election of the President

The Temporary President (*spoke in Spanish*): The preparatory committee recommends that the twenty-first special session should take place under the presidency of the President of the General Assembly at its fifty-third regular session, Mr. Didier Opertti, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uruguay.

I take it that the Assembly wishes to elect Mr. Opertti President of the General Assembly at its twenty-first special session by acclamation.

It was so decided.

The Temporary President (*spoke in Spanish*): I extend my sincere congratulations to Mr. Didier Opertti and invite him to assume the presidency.

I request the Chief of Protocol to escort the President to the podium.

Mr. Opertti took the Chair.

Statement by Mr. Didier Opertti, President of the General Assembly at its twenty-first special session

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me first to express gratitude for my election.

This special session is being held at a doubly important time in world history, as, on one hand, we are on the brink of a new century and a new millennium and, on the other hand, we are poised to welcome with joy the 6 billionth citizen of the world.

I deliberately use the expression "welcome with joy", for what kind of world would this be if we were not joyful at the birth of a new being, if we did not celebrate the birth of a child? Whoever this child is and wherever he or she is born, we wish the child good fortune, we congratulate the parents and we hope that the newborn will enjoy good health, prosperity and a long life.

There are several reasons to believe that, upon reaching a world population of 6 billion, the newborn child could be more fortunate than his predecessors; the one born in 1930, when the world population was 2 billion; the one born in 1960 when the world population was 3 billion; the one born in 1974, when the world population was 4 billion; and the one born in 1987, when the world population was 5 billion.

Indeed, infant mortality has never been so low. Life expectancy has never been longer. There has never been such wealth in the world, and never have so many people shared in it. Never have there been so many well-educated, well-nourished and well-housed people. School enrolment has never been so high, particularly in primary and secondary education. However, despite all this progress that can be shown by objective statistics, we face serious problems of social integration and marginalization that are embedded in cultural, political and economic factors. The inequalities appear to increase objectively as well as subjectively and are accompanied by a widespread sense of deprivation.

However, we also know that there are other reasons to be concerned. We hope that the child whose birth will mark a world population of 6 billion will be able to take advantage of all the positive factors and progress cited earlier. However, it is necessary to remember that of the 2,100 children born this morning in the time it takes me

to make this statement, 1,995 will be born in the poorest countries of the world and most probably to a poor family.

For these children and for their parents, prospects are rather gloomy. In the developing countries as a whole, life expectancy is shorter, the infant mortality rate is higher and income certainly lower than in the industrialized countries. At the same time, income distribution is grossly unequal. For the least developed countries, prospects are even bleaker.

We are here today to continue working dauntlessly to eliminate or at least to mitigate these inequalities and make our contribution to that end. Our main concern is to achieve economic and social development for all countries, based on equity and equality of gender, human rights and social justice. We all know that only by establishing stable conditions of sustained and sustainable development, and by ensuring that all people can reasonably benefit from or share in its benefits, can we secure in the next century the peace that has eluded us in this century.

We do not have only one obligatory choice for development. Thinking of the way towards a more equal and just society does not imply a unique set of universal policies. Instead, we must develop a deep understanding of diverse values and beliefs without losing sight of the common objectives of all humanity. We must be culturally oriented in facing problems of development. Indeed, population problems cannot be resolved mechanically from a single, universal and abstract perspective. Rather, we must carefully study the cultural and social environment of newborns in their various societies in order to promote a reliable, comprehensible and sustainable strategy to achieve certain goals. There will not be an appropriate way to address world problems if the establishment of policies is not accompanied by the study of each culture.

During the decade of the 1990s, the United Nations has become decisively involved in this area and has convened a series of conferences where many of these problems have been addressed. The recommendations of those conferences, taken together, establish the foundations for progress in many areas, especially in social development. Since the holding of these conferences, countries and the international community have been working together towards the agreed goals.

This special session of the General Assembly has been convened to study and to evaluate the progress made in one particular area, that of population and development. At the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, attended by 179 Member States, consensus was reached on a Programme of Action which is both comprehensive and specific. That Programme of Action contains a broad statement of principles as well as specific operative recommendations for action.

The Programme of Action begins by stating the fundamental understanding that each country has the sovereign right to apply the recommendations of the Programme in accordance with its national laws and its development priorities, with full respect for the various religious, ethical and cultural values of its people, which constitute the essence of the human being, and in a manner compatible with internationally established and recognized human rights.

The 15 principles of the Programme of Action are a very clear statement of the basis of the consensus. They are as valid today as they were when the countries of this Organization agreed upon them five years ago. The Programme of Action itself was the fruit of discussions held not merely during the few days of the International Conference on Population and Development, but in the months, even years, before the Conference. It reflects the considered views of all the Member States that were involved in the process. The Programme of Action was extensively quoted and relied upon in the discussions leading up to this special session, and I am sure it will prove equally reliable in the years ahead.

The Conference itself was the culmination of a long process of activities and discussion which may be said to have begun 25 years ago with the World Population Conference, held at Bucharest in 1974. Its roots go even further back, to the very beginning of the United Nations, with the establishment of the Population Commission and of the Population Division to service it. Programmes of action date from the beginning of the activities of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), 30 years ago, in 1969.

I mention this background only to show that population issues have deep and tenacious roots in the United Nations system. Over the last quarter-century, through an exhaustive and inclusive process of dialogue and discussion and through programmes of action and international cooperation, population has become part of the global dialogue on economic and social development. It has become part of every country's political thinking and planning. In relative terms, action on population and development issues has improved the lives of our

citizens; it has strengthened not only individuals, but families, communities and nations.

To this end, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development set goals to be implemented within five, 10 and 20 years in key areas of population and development: reproductive health; maternal and infant mortality; life expectancy; education, specifically the gender gap in education; and, most crucial, the resources, and the allocation of resources, to help achieve these goals.

Members decided to convene this special session to review progress towards these goals and towards implementing the other recommendations made in the Programme of Action. Our common aim is to continue to build on what we agreed upon at the Conference. We have years of experience behind us; it will all go into the discussions of the next few days.

Since 1994, countries have made excellent progress towards the agreed goals. Policies have been reviewed and changed, and new policies have been adopted. Legal frameworks have been reviewed. There is more enthusiasm for enforcing existing constitutional, legal and administrative protections and ensuring that they truly afford protection, notably in the area of gender equality and equity. Services have been reorganized and reformed. New partnerships between Government and civil society have been formed, and have been firmly entrenched at the very core of the issue. Of course, there has also been a redistribution of resources, and it has been necessary to find new resources.

In any case we find agreement on the Programme of Action. There is discussion, of course, about the best way to proceed while preserving and protecting its values and principles. There is discussion on resources and on principles. This session will certainly contribute to that discussion.

I therefore call on all countries to review the resources they allocate to this issue at the domestic level, as well as those they can devote to the implementation of international agreements. The child who will be the six billionth human being deserves the best the modern human family has to offer.

I welcome all participants to the United Nations, and I wish them every success in achieving the most tangible results possible in their discussions over the next few days.

I call now on the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General: The Cairo Conference — the International Conference on Population and Development — whose fifth anniversary we are marking today, was not an isolated event. It was an integral part of the series of great conferences held by the United Nations during the 1990s. I am sure I do not need to remind the Assembly of the themes of those conferences: the global environment, human rights, population, social development, women, and human settlements. Those were distinct topics, but they were all related to each other and to one central, overarching aim: development — development of nations, and development of people.

And all those conferences aimed to reach that goal through an organized, yet voluntary effort: a collective effort on a global scale; an effort by sovereign States and civil society working together; an effort guided by a common approach based on universal values and principles which we all could accept.

So Cairo was not just a population conference. It was a conference on population and development. It was part of a process, going back 25 years or more, during which we have all learned that every society's hopes of social and economic development are intimately linked to demography. All States now understand that if they are to provide adequately for the future health and education of their citizens, they need to incorporate population policies into their development strategy.

Abundant research has shown us that economic growth and development have profound effects on fertility, on the size of families, on the age pyramid, and on patterns of migration. And we hardly need research to tell us that living conditions at the local level — the family and the village — are reflected in the national standard of living. In other words, demography and development are constantly interacting. It seems blindingly obvious now, but until Cairo the world did not fully understand it.

Since Cairo, the world does understand it; and it understands, too, that we have to stabilize the population of this planet. Quite simply, there is a limit to the pressures our global environment can stand. Patterns of consumption are one form of pressure, but another is the sheer size of the world's population, and a third is the way it is distributed around the globe.

That is the global dimension. But there is also an individual dimension. Every human being aspires to health, security and dignity. That is the essence of human rights. And we now realize that sexual and reproductive health is an essential part of those rights.

Do not we all recognize as universal the anguish of the individual who loses a wife or mother in childbirth because proper care is not available; of the teenager whose options in life are suddenly foreclosed, because she gets pregnant and drops out of school; of the woman who has to go on having children, even though she knows her health is at risk; or of the refugee who has been raped but is too frightened, or too ashamed, to ask for help?

Better understanding of these issues has brought real change in the daily life of millions of people. They now have wider choices, and can make key decisions about their own lives. Let me give some examples of how things have changed since the first Population Conference, 25 years ago. Then, women in developing countries had an average of five children each; today they have fewer than three. Then, 30 per cent of couples used family planning; today, 60 per cent do so — and the vast majority of Governments now support it. Then, 140 out of every 1,000 babies born alive would die during childhood; now, only 80 will. Then, average life expectancy was 59 years; now, it is 66. And in many countries, fewer women now die in childbirth, although reliable statistics on this are hard to come by and it is certainly an area where much needs to be done.

Meanwhile, at the global level, the rate of growth of the world's population has slowed dramatically, from 2 per cent to 1.3 per cent per year. In another 25 years it should be down to 0.8 per cent.

We are still adding 78 million to our numbers every year, but that figure, too, should decline, at first slowly and then, in the second decade of the century, quite steeply.

All that is good news, for which every nation in the world can take some credit. States have acted on internationally agreed principles and on their own national priorities and values. Most of them have achieved slower, more balanced population growth, not by coercion but by enhancing individual freedom.

We can all be proud that this has been achieved with the help of international consensus and cooperation under United Nations auspices. We should also acknowledge that it was not done by States alone. Non-governmental organizations and other parts of civil society made a big contribution. They spread the word. They lobbied for policy changes. They mobilized people to support national initiatives.

So have we done all that the Cairo Conference recommended? No, my friends, there is still much to do. In too many countries, girls still do not have the same chance to be educated as boys. Too many women still cannot choose when or whether to become pregnant. Too many women are victims of sexual violence, especially during conflict. Too many women resort to abortions that are not safe. Too many are still subjected to genital mutilation and other harmful traditional practices. Too many men remain ignorant of, or indifferent to, their responsibility for their family and its reproductive health.

Too many people are still exposed to sexually transmitted diseases; too many countries are being ravaged by the spread of AIDS; people in developing countries still die too young — as they do in the former communist countries, in some of which life expectancy has actually declined — and so on.

The stakes could hardly be higher. If only we could implement the Cairo Programme in full, we could make a tremendous difference to human rights, to hopes of prosperity and to the sustainable use of natural resources.

We must do it. But we cannot do it without funds. In Cairo, everyone agreed on the need to mobilize new financial resources, from within developing countries and also from the international community. Since then, developing countries have proved their commitment. But they are cruelly limited in what they can achieve without outside help. Too often — let us admit it — they are also limited by the effects of conflicts, arms spending or inadequate leadership.

But too often, also, they have to give priority to debt servicing, or to Draconian budgetary austerity imposed in the name of structural adjustment. In all cases, it is the people who suffer. They are entitled to expect more sympathy and better treatment from countries which are more fortunate.

I know that it is easier said than done. Even rich countries contain many poor people, and their Governments face many competing claims. But what could be more important than the chance to help the world's people control their numbers through greater prosperity and wider choice?

We can do it. Thanks to Cairo, we now know how to do it. Let us all reaffirm the pledges we made in Cairo. In the next few days, specific proposals will be put before the Assembly. They are the fruit of five years' experience, and are based firmly on the principles agreed in the Cairo Programme.

This special session gives us a unique chance to face up to what is undoubtedly one of the great challenges — perhaps the greatest challenge — of the coming century. You are meeting in the right place — the United Nations, the world's only truly global forum. We in the Secretariat and in the United Nations Population Fund, are here to help you. I wish you success in your deliberations. I wish us all success in the next five years in implementing the Cairo Programme.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

Item 5 of the provisional agenda

Report of the Commission on Population and Development acting as the preparatory committee for the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly (A/S-21/2 and Add.1 and 2)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the Chairman of the Commission on Population and Development acting as the preparatory committee for the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly, His Excellency Mr. Anwarul Karim Chowdhury of Bangladesh.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh), Chairman of the Commission on Population and Development acting as the preparatory committee for the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly: It is with great pleasure that I take the floor to present the report of the Commission on Population and Development acting as the preparatory committee for the special session of the General Assembly on the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), contained in the official documents of this session in document A/S-21/2 and Add.1 and Add.2.

The Commission on Population and Development, acting as the preparatory committee for the special session, held the first part of its session from 24 March to 1 April 1999. Informal consultations were subsequently held from 6 to 8 May. The preparatory committee held its resumed session from 24 to 29 June to finalize its work.

The preparatory committee was open-ended to allow the full participation of all States and observers. A number of United Nations bodies, specialized agencies, intergovernmental organizations represented by observers and a large number of non-governmental organizations participated in these sessions.

The preparatory committee devoted its time mostly to negotiating the main substantive document on the basis of a working paper submitted by the Chairman that contained proposals for key future actions for further implementation of the Programme of Action of the ICPD.

During the protracted negotiations in the sessions of the preparatory committee, as well as in the May informals, our deliberations were very fruitful and, at the same time, difficult and extremely strenuous, with the pace of progress often getting bogged down. However, the sincere efforts and firm commitment of delegations to working together to reach a consensus helped us to overcome many of the apparently insurmountable difficulties.

In the end, the outcome was very positive. There has been substantial and substantive progress achieved, as reflected in our documents. We were able to reach consensus on most of the text, including sections dealing with vitally important issues, such as gender equality and empowerment of women, the need for a gender perspective, reproductive health, maternal mortality and morbidity, HIV/AIDS issues, resource partnership and collaborations, as well as macroeconomic issues. Despite our intense efforts, a few paragraphs of the main document remain outstanding. We are working on them and this will continue in the Committee of the Whole of this session. Please note that paragraphs 53 and 55 of A/S-21/2/Add.2 have been agreed upon since the document was accepted by the preparatory committee last night.

The ICPD Programme of Action is a very well-balanced text. It was a turning point in our approach to issues of population and development. It has guided population policies and programmes over the last five years and will continue to do so for many years to come.

The topics in the document kept the delegations intensely engaged. The attendance was always full. This resulted in a substantive, rich and full discussion of all

conceivable aspects of the issues. I am happy to say that we have not only reviewed the implementation of the Programme of Action of Cairo, but also substantially enriched the understanding and deepened the consensus through a process of prolonged and constructive engagement. We should be proud of the progress we have made in the substantive aspects of the document.

I have already mentioned that reaching an agreement was difficult more often than not. My efforts were greatly aided by the Bureau, which was of immense help in working with key delegations to arrive at a text agreeable to all. My heartfelt thanks go to my colleagues from Brazil, Canada, Finland, Ghana, Jamaica, Japan, Romania and Uganda, who served with me in the Bureau.

The Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund, Mrs. Nafis Sadik, was of immense help and support in our deliberations. Her excellent team was of great assistance in our work. I would also like to record my appreciation to those in the Secretariat who have worked tirelessly to facilitate the process in so many ways.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Chairman of the Commission of Population and Development acting as the preparatory committee for the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly for his statement. The General Assembly is, of course, grateful to him and to those who participated in the preparatory committee for their efforts to get this special session off to a good start.

Item 6 of the provisional agenda

Organization of the session

Draft decision II (A/S-21/2)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Members are invited to turn to draft decision II recommended by the preparatory committee in paragraph 35 of its report, contained in document A/S-21/2.

Draft decision II is entitled "Organizational arrangements for the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly". May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to adopt draft decision II?

Draft decision II was adopted.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): On the basis of the decision just taken by the General Assembly on the recommendations of the preparatory committee, the following arrangements shall apply to the twenty-first special session:

The Vice-Presidents of the twenty-first special session shall be the same as those of the fifty-third regular session of the General Assembly.

The Vice-Presidents of the fifty-third regular session are the representatives of the following Member States: Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, China, France, Georgia, Germany, Lesotho, Liberia, Morocco, Myanmar, Nicaragua, the Russian Federation, San Marino, Senegal, Suriname, the Syrian Arab Republic, Turkmenistan, Uganda, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Yemen.

If there is no objection, I shall take it that the representatives of those States are elected Vice-Presidents of the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly.

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Regarding the Chairmen of the Main Committees of the twenty-first special session, the Chairmen of the Main Committees of the fifty-third regular session shall serve in the same capacity at the special session.

The Chairmen of the Main Committees at the fifty-third regular session are the following: the Chairman of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), Mr. Pablo Macedo of Mexico; the Chairman of the Second Committee, Mr. Bagher Asadi of the Islamic Republic of Iran; the Chairman of the Third Committee, Mr. Ali Hachani of Tunisia; the Chairman of the Fifth Committee, Mr. Movses Abelian of Armenia; and the Chairman of the Sixth Committee, Mr. Jargalsaikhany Enkhsaikhan of Mongolia.

If there is no objection, I take it that the Assembly decides to elect these representatives Chairmen of the Main Committees at the twenty-first special session.

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): As concerns the First Committee, in the absence of its Chairman, Ms. Akmaral Arystanbekova of Kazakhstan, Vice-Chairperson of the First Committee, will be Acting

Chairperson of the Committee for the duration of the special session.

In adopting the recommendations of the preparatory committee, the Assembly has established an ad hoc committee of the whole, which will be designated as Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the Twenty-first Special Session.

In accordance with the recommendations of the preparatory committee just adopted by the General Assembly, the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole will be a full member of the General Committee of the twenty-first special session.

Concerning the election of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole, the preparatory committee recommends that its Chairman, Mr. Anwarul Karim Chowdhury of Bangladesh, serve in the same capacity in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole.

I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly at its twenty-first special session to elect him Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole by acclamation.

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I congratulate His Excellency Mr. Anwarul Karim Chowdhury on behalf of the General Assembly, and on my own behalf, and wish him well in the important and onerous responsibilities that he has just assumed.

The General Committee of the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly has now been fully constituted.

We turn now to matters concerning the participation of speakers other than Member States in the work of the special session.

On the basis of the decision just taken by the General Assembly, observers may make statements in the debate in the plenary.

States members of the specialized agencies of the United Nations that are not Members of the United Nations, namely, the Cook Islands, the Holy See, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Switzerland, Tonga and Tuvalu, may participate in the work of the twenty-first special session in the capacity of observers.

Associate members of the regional commissions, namely, American Samoa, Anguilla, Aruba, the British Virgin Islands, the Cook Islands, French Polynesia, Guam, Hong Kong China, Macau, Montserrat, the Netherlands Antilles, New Caledonia, Niue, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands may participate in the special session, in the same capacity of observer that held for their participation in the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development.

Representatives of the United Nations system may make statements in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole.

In view of time constraints, representatives of non-governmental organizations may make statements in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole.

In accordance with the decision just adopted by the General Assembly, there will be nine plenary meetings over the three-day period, with three meetings per day: from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. and from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. In view of the large number of representatives already inscribed on the list of speakers for the debate in the plenary, I should like to inform members that I intend to start the plenary meetings punctually at 10 a.m., 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. In this connection, I would like to assure the Assembly that I shall be in the Chair punctually at the scheduled time. I sincerely hope that all delegations will make a special effort to cooperate in this regard.

With regard to the length of statements in the debate in the plenary, I should like to remind representatives that, on the basis of the decision just adopted by the Assembly, statements in the debate should not exceed seven minutes. In connection with the time limits, a light system has been installed at the speakers' rostrum which functions as follows: a green light will be activated at the start of the speaker's statement; an orange light will be activated 30 seconds before the end of the seven minutes; a red light will be activated when the seven-minute limit has elapsed. I should like to appeal to speakers in the debate in the plenary to cooperate in observing the time limits of their statements, so that all those inscribed on the list of speakers for a given meeting will be heard at that meeting.

I should now like to draw the attention of representatives to a matter concerning the participation of Palestine, in its capacity as observer, in the sessions and work of the General Assembly. Members will recall

Assembly resolution 52/250 of 7 July 1998 and its annex, as well as a note by the Secretary-General contained in document A/52/1002 that outlines the Secretary-General's understanding of the implementation of the modalities annexed to the resolution. I should like to draw attention in particular to paragraph 6 of the annex to resolution 52/250, which reads as follows:

> "The right to make interventions, with a precursory explanation or the recall of relevant General Assembly resolutions being made only once by the President of the General Assembly at the start of each session of the Assembly."

Accordingly, for the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly, the observer of Palestine will therefore participate in the work of the General Assembly in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974, resolution 43/177 of 15 December 1988 and resolution 52/250 of 7 July 1998, with no further need for a precursory explanation prior to any intervention by Palestine in this special session.

Item 7 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The provisional agenda of the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly is contained in document A/S-21/2, which has been recommended for adoption by the preparatory committee as draft decision I in paragraph 35 of its report. In order to expedite its work, the Assembly may wish to consider the provisional agenda directly in plenary meeting without referring it to the General Committee.

May I take it that the General Assembly agrees to this procedure?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): May I take it then that the Assembly wishes to adopt the provisional agenda as it appears in document A/S-21/2?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Regarding the allocation of items, it is recommended that while all items will remain allocated to the plenary, agenda item 8, entitled "Overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development", will also be allocated to the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the twenty-first special session for consideration, on the understanding that the debate on the item shall take place in plenary meeting.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt this proposal?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Under agenda item 8, the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole will consider the proposals for key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the text of which is to be found in document A/S-21/2/Add.2.

Agenda item 8

Overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will first hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Alberto Fujimori, President of the Republic of Peru.

President Fujimori (*spoke in Spanish*): As never before in the history of mankind, the issues of population and development are closely intertwined. This linkage is of decisive importance for all developing countries and takes on dramatic proportions for the poorest among them. For that reason I attended, as head of State, the Beijing Conference on Women. And while I was in very excellent company, I felt strange being the only male president there.

There is no doubt that the gap between poor and rich countries has continued to increase, contrary to the supposed logic that we all espouse: that of globalized growth. We are not questioning the basis and economic premises of globalization, but it is only prudent to warn of the serious implications of the lack of social results to match the serious situation which a large part of the earth's peoples are experiencing.

This is how in the non-developed world the vicious circle of poverty-unwanted children-poverty is gaining strength. We have to break this circle definitively through realistic population policies with macroeconomic

foundations that allow the necessary stability for sustained national development and the parallel rational demographic policies. Such policies are rational because they engage citizens' rational faculties and their freedom to decide without the State's attempting in any way to impose coercive methods.

Not everything can be done at the same time or as fast as we would like. The logical choice, therefore, is to use scarce resources appropriately and productively to achieve the greatest number of national objectives. In this way we may achieve a virtuous circle of prosperity-a family that can be taken care of-prosperity.

In the developing countries, basic services such as health, education and security are still, unfortunately, scarce and inadequate. For such time as States cannot realistically redress this situation and provide these basic services in greater quantity and quality, we have to provide couples with information so that they can decide, freely, what size their families are to be, in keeping with their resources, so that they can practise responsible parenthood.

Without information, couples would have unwanted children that they cannot maintain, that is, that they cannot feed and educate properly, leading to adolescents without a future who — and allow me these harsh words — will become victims of social disgraces such as prostitution or delinquency.

Allow me now to turn to the case of Peru. Our country has had an explicit national population policy since 1995, that is, since the Cairo Conference, and we have strengthened our institutional capability and increased coverage and quality of reproductive and family health services.

Concerning the reproductive health targets, our country has achieved an appreciable degree of development in coverage since 1993, and has succeeded in bringing such services to an ever-increasing number of people. In 1993, the number of couples who opted to use contraception was 340,000. Three years later, with the beginning of the reproductive health programme, coverage of 610,000 couples using modern methods had been achieved, and in 1999, about a million couples had access to the programme. In other words, we have almost tripled coverage in barely 6 years.

I wonder, if there are so many couples wanting, first, information and, secondly, support from the State, should the State hold itself aloof from the majority of its citizens to spare itself criticism and attacks? The logical answer has to be no, because it is the State's obligation to meet those demands. And the answer is again no when, in full view of and with total forbearance from the very ones who criticize, middle- and upper-class women do have access to the information and services those critics would deny women in the lower classes.

The overall fertility rate has been going down for a number of years now as women have had increasing access to a higher level of education. In Peru 30 years ago, the overall fertility rate was six children per women, whereas five years ago it was 3.4. Now the figure is down to 3 per woman. These indicators are intimately related to those for infant mortality, which are falling sharply, and the population growth rate, which was 2.8 per cent per annum in the 1970s and 2.1 per cent at the beginning of the 1990s, has now fallen to 1.8 per cent.

The fundamental objective of the programme is to put the most appropriate information and methods within the reach of our people so that they can achieve their reproductive ideal. In Peru, 64 per cent of married and cohabiting women do not want any more children, and 23 per cent want to space out their pregnancies. I repeat: why should they not have access to information if they want it? One expression of the unmet demand for information is the high number of abortions, which are prohibited in my country but nevertheless are performed. Conservative figures estimate the number of abortions at about 250,000 a year, which is a considerable number when compared with 610,000 births each year. Many of these abortion cases result in serious complications and unfortunately end in the death of the woman as the outcome of an obviously unwanted pregnancy. And this situation is surely repeated in the world's underdeveloped countries.

Mortality rates in Peru are among the highest in the western hemisphere, and contraceptive methods, whether natural or artificial, therefore become and important factor for preventing maternal deaths in our country. The programme has clearly worked, despite its detractors, and we would have made even more progress if those detractors had not put so many stumbling blocks in the way. Not only have we had to battle against established customs and the preachings of a number of conservative sectors, we also — although this may be difficult to believe — have had to deal with a number of non-governmental organizations which, when they did not get the budgetary support they expected, joined the campaign

being waged by some parts of the media and certain political sectors and, betraying their principles, acted in opposition to the reproductive health programmes.

Isolated cases, which we regret and which have not recurred, concerning the AQV, voluntary surgical contraception, were blown out of proportion; and people began to talk about massive sterilization and create an uproar with the aim of doing political damage to the Government, by telling the world it was eliminating the poor and the Indians. Even some North American Congressmen joined the campaign, lending it strength. The percentages of morbidity and mortality in the Peruvian voluntary surgical contraception programme are within international standards. I therefore do not know what to say about this campaign. I cannot find the right words.

Nonetheless, the results achieved have had other positive repercussions at the social level, including interest in gender equity and the consideration of State policies to promote and improve the situation of women. During recent years, this interest in gender equity has been gaining strength among the highest authorities of various countries of the world, which has allowed for a strengthening of the process of overcoming gender inequities between men and women, improving the access of women to education, economic and labour activity, participation in political life and improved health care. In that regard, reduction of the illiteracy rate, mainly the female illiteracy rate, should be one of our basic objectives.

However, the State, women's organizations and human rights organizations need to continue to work forcefully in their efforts to eliminate violence against women and violence within the family. This problem of the health and citizens' security should be given adequate attention and prevented. Measures adopted worldwide through the establishment of social networks and broadly representative forums are becoming one relevant element of society's response to all forms of violence against women and the family.

The concept in vogue today is globalization. However, strangely, it does seem to apply to the rights of women, as if women should live isolated from the course of history. In every country, adolescents constitute an important sector of the population with a greater and greater need for information and education in sexual and reproductive health.

The greatest successes in this field will be reached through activity in education and in preventing unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, such as AIDS, and risky behaviour, such as violence and drug addiction. The State should also ensure access for adolescents to quality reproductive health services for the prevention of unwanted pregnancy as a right enshrined in all programmes of actions worldwide. I am convinced that only through timely education which covers a society as a whole will we be able to obtain positive results on population and make it a real agent of change for development.

Peru recognizes that the points of the Programme of Action adopted at the Cairo Conference on Population and Development constitute the basis of international population policies, on the basis of which each country has the right to determine its implementation in accordance with its national laws and development priorities. Compatible and effective development and population policies will mean greater well-being and the gradual elimination of threat looming over the dignity of some peoples.

We cannot see women solely in the context of their beautiful procreative function. Women have the right to develop themselves fully, in parallel to national development, and thus contribute to national development. I therefore reiterate the imperative need to bravely, decisively and nationally to end the vicious circle of poverty-unwanted children-poverty to arrive at the virtuous circle of prosperity-a family that can be taken care of prosperity. We would then be seeing the first light at the end of the tunnel of discrimination against women.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the President of the Republic of Peru for his statement.

The Assembly will now hear a statement by Mr. Gustavo Bell Lemus, Vice-President of the Republic of Colombia.

Mr. Bell Lemus (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is my honour and privilege as Vice-President of Colombia to address this historic session of the General Assembly. It constitutes an important opportunity to give new impetus to the efforts by the international community in the field of population and development, which are vital for humankind.

In 1994, at the Cairo Conference, we committed ourselves to implement an ambitious Programme of Action, aimed at addressing the challenges of world

population growth and managing such growth in accordance with the economic and social development needs of our countries.

Today, five years later, we can recognize with satisfaction the progress made and also the long way still to go. The universal principles and ethical values that inspired the Cairo Conference have helped us both as a fundamental guide for action and as an incentive to face those challenges. Yet we need a new political impulse, a profound commitment, so as to ensure that the high ideals we all share will be translated into practical results and better living conditions for huge sectors of the world's population.

The Government of Colombia has committed itself to a great effort to achieve social change. Our national development plan, "Change to Build Peace", is based on this development perspective, and its main goal is to consolidate a lasting peace based on social justice. Population policies occupy a special priority place within this plan. Colombia has made significant achievements in population stabilization. Over the last few decades we have been able to reduce population growth considerably. Decreased fertility rates and better health care and disease prevention have helped to achieve greater life expectancy. The infant mortality rate in Colombia is notably lower than the world average.

Such factors as the provision of reproductive health services, active cooperation between Government and non-governmental organizations, the role of women in society, the promotion of gender equity and equality, respect for reproductive and sexual rights and increased access to education and information have been decisive in those achievements.

The National Constitution of Colombia contains clear provisions on reproductive rights, and our Parliament has adopted social security laws based on these concepts. Furthermore, the national development plan outlines specific actions to consolidate reproductive and sexual health programmes, within a clear gender perspective. In Colombia, all norms and political decisions in this field have been adopted within the framework agreed upon at the Cairo Conference.

Today, Colombia ranks third in Latin American and the Caribbean in population size. It stands out at the international level owing to its progress in achieving a demographic transition. We have surpassed almost all thresholds agreed upon at Cairo. Colombia is also one of the leading countries in the developing world in the area of South-South cooperation on population matters. We have participated actively in the Partners in Population and Development programme. In implementing that initiative, and thanks to the combination of national efforts and international support, we are providing cooperation to other countries through training programmes on reproductive and sexual health. Direct participation of the non-governmental sector in these activities has been an important factor for success.

Of course we still have many challenges to overcome. For that reason, I would like to reaffirm my country's commitment to the objectives adopted at Cairo, as well as to the additional actions we will agree upon during this special session of the General Assembly. Colombia's population policy framework will remain consistent with those goals and with economic and social development requirements. Achievements in this demanding field do not depend only on our domestic efforts. Support by the international community is crucial, especially through the mobilization of financial resources, human-resources development and institutional capacity-building.

In the view of Colombia, the document that will be adopted at the end of this session will be an important platform to reinforce the momentum and deepen the political will towards fulfillment of the goals of the Programme of Action. Allow me to underline in this connection some considerations that we believe are essential to ensuring the successful implementation of the Programme.

First, we must stress the formulation of population policies as a basic component of development strategies. While recognizing its demographic dimension and its importance from the human health perspective, it is essential that future action in this area be undertaken in the broader context of commitments entered into in the spheres of international cooperation and sustainable development. Hence, highest priority should be accorded actions aimed at compensating for the social impact of the recent international financial crisis, particularly in the fields of education, health and population programmes.

Second, legitimate and universally accepted results cannot be attained without clear policies and concrete results on international migration. Restrictions in this area are one of the most serious, unjustified and still unexplained imbalances in the globalization process.

Third, it is necessary to remove the economic and social barriers that prevent the full enjoyment of reproductive and sexual rights and of sexual health, something that is indispensable for guaranteeing effective population policies based on gender equality and equity.

Fourth, we must adopt more decisive measures for adolescents and elderly people. The former constitute a powerful resource for the future development of our countries; the future of world reproductive health lies in their hands. And elderly people form an increasing proportion of the world population and now need greater attention and keener social awareness than before.

Fifth, to reduce maternal mortality rates requires a decisive collective commitment and wider international support. Urgent action is required to improve women's health and nutrition, reduce the number of unwanted pregnancies and guarantee safe and effective family planning methods.

Sixth, action aimed at strengthening cooperation between governmental and non-governmental actors should also be strengthened. Active participation by non-governmental organizations will be increasingly important in achieving successful implementation of the Programme of Action.

Seventh, the international community must increase its support for South-South cooperation efforts. The results achieved through the Partners in Population and Development programme constitute a positive experience which merits firm support.

Finally, we must restore the credibility of the Cairo Programme of Action by mobilizing international financial resources, an area in which the results fall far short of the expectations aroused by commitments that had been undertaken. In this context, it is absolutely imperative that resources for the United Nations Population Fund be increased.

As we approach the new century, when the world population is only weeks from reaching the historic 6 billion mark, and in the midst of the silent revolution of the demographic transition of the past several decades, it is time for the international community to promote further actions and to strengthen its leadership and determination. It is time for action. The decisions to be adopted at this session will affect the quality of life of generations to come. Let us not hesitate to assume this noble political commitment.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Vice-President of the Republic of Colombia for his statement.

I now call on Her Excellency Mrs. Valentina I. Matvienko, Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation.

Mrs. Matvienko (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The International Conference on Population and Development, held at Cairo, gave a powerful impetus to the world community, including Russia, to work towards the formulation and implementation of comprehensive policies in this sphere. In the five years since Cairo, certain results have been achieved at the global level in such key areas as the reduction of maternal and infant mortality, improvements in reproductive health and better access to education. We recognize the important role played here by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the central body in United Nations activities in this area.

But it is clear that in terms of a number of specific indicators, the pace of progress remains unsatisfactory. In our view, this is largely connected with other unresolved problems, including the social costs of macroeconomic reform and the grave global consequences of the financial crises in Asia, Latin America and Russia over the past two years. The complexity of the phenomenon of globalization and the insufficient mobilization of resources for population activities jeopardize the attainment of the Cairo objectives.

It is therefore important to increase the attention that is paid to the social components of economic development and to put the human person — human dignity, human rights, economic and spiritual potential and, most important, life and health — at the centre of national and international policies. These key elements should be a part of the concept of peace in the twenty-first century that the President of the Russian Federation, Boris Yeltsin, has proposed be formulated.

We are convinced that guaranteeing peaceful conditions for development is the sine qua non for progress in the implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action. For several months the world witnessed a war in the Balkans — a region of the world that, in economic terms, is relatively prosperous — in which the vital social infrastructure and human potential of a sovereign State were deliberately destroyed. The scale of the damage to tens of thousands of houses, thousands of schools and

hundreds of health care institutions, including hospitals and polyclinics, is now being assessed. The health of the people of Yugoslavia and the condition of its environment have been jeopardized, and the development potential of that country has been undermined.

That unprecedented humanitarian crisis will require vast resources and many years of effort to end the suffering of the people and restore to them a peaceful life. Unless these problems are swiftly resolved, primarily by the contributions of those who bear the blame for the bombing, any talk about global responsibility for population and development issues is meaningless.

Russia is fully committed to the spirit and objectives of the Cairo Conference. Guided by the Cairo principles, the Government is pursuing a purposeful population policy. State approaches to the resolution of demographic problems have been fundamentally adjusted.

The conditions in which the Government is operating, as is known, are far from simple. Like a number of other countries with economies in transition, Russia is facing serious demographic problems, which emerged during the market reforms of the 1990s. The mortality rate remains high, especially among men of working age, and the birth rate remains low, as a result of which the size of the population is continuing to decrease. Life expectancy has gone down. The health of Russian citizens is deteriorating, especially among children and young people. Infectious diseases, including sexually transmitted diseases, have been spreading at an increasing rate. There is an acute problem of forced migration, especially labour migration, which is often illegal.

In order to overcome those negative trends, the Government has started to prepare concrete measures, both short term and long term, on the basis of the concept of a programme of action to resolve the demographic crisis in the Russian Federation, which was elaborated last year. Our main priorities are to reduce mortality rates, improve health services, provide acceptable living standards and increase social protection.

The Government of Russia is devoting serious attention to the protection of reproductive health and is promoting comprehensive preventive measures in this area, including a universal system for the ultrasound screening of women's reproductive systems. As a result, we have to some extent stabilized the infant mortality rate, although it remains unacceptably high.

Since 1994 the implementation of the presidential programmes on family planning and safe motherhood has made it possible to reduce the total number of abortions by almost one third and to achieve a reduction in abortion-related maternal mortality rates of more than 20 per cent. To a large extent, such changes were made possible by the active involvement of non-governmental organizations in resolving the problem.

The national policies with regard to the family, women and children are being implemented in a consistent manner. The national plans of action for children and the advancement of women, which were approved by the President of Russia, are being implemented. The provisions of the Family Code of the Russian Federation are being put into practice. These stress, in particular, guarantees of the rights of children, including the provision of a general education and protection against abuse and violence in the family.

The State is trying to guarantee the interests of the elderly, who constitute a growing segment of Russian society and are its most vulnerable group. To that end a federal programme, entitled "A Senior Generation", is being implemented. Long-term benchmarks have been established for social policies for the elderly.

Russia's State migration policy is facing the challenge of regulating migration flows, mitigating the negative consequences of unregulated migration and creating conditions for the implementation of policies to recognize the rights of migrants and ensure the humane treatment of people seeking asylum in Russia. An active component of this policy is the improvement of the situation and the protection the rights of our compatriots abroad.

One of the main obstacles to implementing Russia's population and development policy is the lack of public funding to finance necessary socio-demographic programmes. We need to find new sources of funding and mobilize both domestic and external resources. In this context, an important role is to be played by international cooperation. The mobilization of external support for Russia's reforms with regard to population is more important than ever. We look forward to increased assistance in these areas, both from traditional bilateral partners and from multilateral organizations, including the United Nations system.

We attach great importance to the growing cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund

(UNFPA). It is important to ensure that cooperation with multilateral organizations be based on broad-based partnership with civil society, including non-governmental organizations, the private sector, academia and local authorities in Russia's regions. Given the similarity of many problems and objectives, we would favour a more active regional approach by United Nations bodies to such cooperation which could, for example, cover the needs of interested countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and Central and Eastern Europe.

In conclusion, I should like to express the hope that the proposals for key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, to be adopted at this special session of the General Assembly, will make a real practical contribution to resolving the global problem of population in all its multifaceted aspects.

During the course of my short, seven-minute statement, thousands of new lives have been brought into the world. Let us wish those children prosperity and happiness in this world.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Wang Zhongyu, State Counsellor of China.

Mr. Wang Zhongyu (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): First of all, on behalf of the Chinese delegation and on my own behalf, I wish to extend my congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly at the current special session. The Chinese delegation will work with you and with other delegations to make this special session a complete success.

Since the convening of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) five years ago, the international community and various Governments have made relentless efforts to implement the ICPD Programme of Action. Encouraging progress has been made in improving the status of women, increasing access to education and lowering the birth rate, maternal mortality rate and infant mortality rate. All of these efforts have contributed to promoting the social and economic development of countries and improving their people's health and welfare.

In the meantime, we have also noted that we still have a long way to go before achieving the goals defined in the ICPD Programme of Action. In some countries and regions, economic crisis, natural disasters, regional wars and conflicts, as well as a lack of resources have seriously hindered progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action. Therefore, we believe that it was necessary and timely to convene the current special session of the General Assembly to reiterate the principles and spirit of the Programme of Action, summarize past experiences and lessons and explore ways and means to solve existing problems.

As the most populous developing country in the world, China has made the population issue a strategic one and integrated it into its overall programme of national socio-economic development. Since the Cairo Conference, the Chinese Government has given high priority to the implementation of the Programme of Action, formulated the National Family Planning Programme of China and set long-term goals for its population and family-planning work. The Government sees sustainable development as a major strategic principle and views the population issue in a broader perspective. China's population and family-planning programme places greater emphasis on the integrated approach of waging publicity and education campaigns, providing quality services in reproductive health and family planning, and bringing into play the roles of civil society and non-governmental organizations. We are opposed to coercive measures. Special attention has been given to combining the family-planning programme in the rural areas with economic development, poverty-alleviation, universal access to education, improving of women's status and transforming outdated family concepts.

China's population and family-planning programme has not only stabilized China's population and facilitated its socio-economic development, but also greatly contributed to the stabilization of the world population. At the same time, we are aware of the fact that China still faces daunting challenges in terms of population and development. The annual population growth of 12 million people has placed tremendous pressure on our socio-economic development, resource utilization, environmental protection and education and health services. It has also created many new problems.

I wish to take this opportunity to elaborate briefly on the principled position of the Chinese Government on the further implementation of the Programme of Action.

First of all, the Chinese Government believes that the issue of population goes hand in hand with that of development. The population issue should be considered

and addressed in the light of a country's national conditions and socio-economic development. Efforts should be made to develop a coordinated relationship between population growth and socio-economic development, resource utilization and environmental protection so as to achieve sustainable development. The Chinese Government respects human rights in the field of population and development. We believe that, when we talk about protecting human rights, what comes first are the rights to subsistence and development of all nations and peoples. Development is the basis for promoting and protecting human rights. Without this basis, human rights are devoid of any real meaning.

Secondly, international cooperation in the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action should be undertaken in full respect for the sovereignty of each country. The differences in economic development levels, history and cultural traditions, religious beliefs and moral values of each country should be taken into full consideration. Overlooking such differences will make the goals defined in the Programme of Action unattainable.

Thirdly, effective resource mobilization is the key to the implementation of the Programme of Action. We appeal to the international community, especially the developed countries, to honour the commitments made at the Cairo Conference to providing financial assistance to developing countries and helping them to overcome their difficulties. China hopes that, at this special session, action-oriented proposals will be put forward to solve this problem.

We hope that this special session will provide us with a golden opportunity to advance the full implementation of the Programme of Action and with a new starting point for international cooperation in the field of population and development. The Chinese Government and people stand ready to join all the Governments and peoples of the world in contributing to world peace and human progress.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to His Excellency The Honourable Kwamena Ahwoi, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development of Ghana.

Mr. Ahwoi (Ghana): It is my honour and privilege to make this statement on behalf of the Republic of Ghana.

Even before the Cairo Conference in 1994, Ghana had revised its population policy and anticipated in many material respects the goals, principles and strategies recommended by the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). The end product, while emphasizing issues relating to adolescents, youth, women, the aged and persons with disabilities, also incorporated such emerging issues as the environment and the threat of HIV/AIDS. It represents the collective determination and commitment of the people to the principle that a well-managed population is a fundamental requirement for sustainable development.

The post-ICPD era has been for Ghana one of continuity in the sense that relevant areas of past policies have been reinforced, while other areas have witnessed changes meant to address new concepts and issues. The ultimate objective is a people-centred development policy, which will create opportunities for all Ghanaians to realize their full potential through the exercise of meaningful choices.

The general policy environment within which we are implementing our Revised Population Policy and the ICPD Programme of Action has been considerably enhanced by the Government's blueprint for socio-economic transformation, entitled "Vision 2020: The First Step", which sets out the medium- and long-term goals, targets and strategies required to transform Ghana into a middle-income economy by 2020.

The decentralization of both political power and responsibility for planning as a means of promoting community involvement in all aspects of the development process is now a critical strategy to ensure that population concerns are fully integrated into district- and subdistrict-level planning, as well as programme activities.

The objective is to take full account of population variables in planning and policy-making at the district level, where it matters most. It is in this respect that my Government attaches the utmost importance to the population and housing census to be conducted early next year — the first in 16 years. Indeed, plans are almost complete for a trial census next month.

A vastly improved legal and policy environment has ensured that the necessary laws have been passed and other consequential measures taken to promote gender equality, equity and the empowerment of women. Female genital mutilation has been outlawed. The practice of confining girls in shrines as a punishment for "crimes" committed by members of their families has been criminalized.

In active collaboration with the Parliamentary Caucus on Population and Development, the search continues for such other areas of law and policy as are in need of reform. An affirmative action policy recently approved by the Cabinet, among other things, commits the Government to ensuring 40 per cent of political representation for women and their appointment to various bodies.

In order to achieve the desired change in behaviour, attitudes and practice, we will continue to engage in constant advocacy and consensus-building by fostering and maintaining strategic partnerships and functional linkages with non-governmental organizations, youth and women's groups and community and opinion leaders, especially traditional rulers and religious leaders, as well as the private sector.

Appropriate policy guidelines have been developed to guide programme implementers in the field of reproductive and sexual health as well as reproductive rights. We have integrated reproductive health into our primary health care and referral systems. In addition, a full range of basic reproductive health services is provided at these levels.

We recognize the right of individuals and couples to plan their families. Consequently, strategies, including information and education, have been designed to generate demand for the fullest possible range of family-planning methods. A campaign for the use of long-term family-planning methods is being actively waged.

The identified high-risk HIV/AIDS age group of 20 to 35 years has been targeted for special attention. The national response to the epidemic is being comprehensively reviewed and a draft national policy is in the course of preparation. A draft policy on ageing is also being prepared.

Ghana is determined to implement the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action to the letter, and in this regard we are committing as many resources as we can to the social sector. However, we face serious resource constraints as a result of policies that we are having to implement to ensure macroeconomic stability and, more significantly, as a result of the unsustainable external debt repayment terms and diminished economic potential arising from problems of market access. The impact of these is to further constrain our ability to deal with problems encountered in the implementation of the Programme of Action. These problems include shortage of trained manpower, inequitable distribution of health service staff, inadequate access to services, especially in rural areas, and negative socio-cultural beliefs and practices. Permit me to emphasize that without significant improvement in the external environment for trade, debt-servicing and debt repayment, our efforts will not lead to the targets agreed in the Programme of Action, even if our partners do more to meet the agreed official development assistance targets and their commitments in the Programme of Action.

We are committed to undertaking these activities because they serve the best interests of our people, and we would implement them even without the Programme of Action. The Programme of Action, however, offers a partnership, shared interests and opportunities, which enhance our capacity to achieve our goal of sustainable human development within our limited resources.

It is our hope, therefore, that the entire review process will lead to a renewal of commitments made in Cairo and, where circumstances dictate, as indeed is the case in a number of areas, to even greater commitment.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Jerzy Kropiwnicki, Minister, Member of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Poland.

Mr. Kropiwnicki (Poland): May I begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your election to the responsible post of President of the General Assembly at its twenty-first special session. The session is an important world event, as it is the evidence of the appreciation of the international community for the activities aimed at the versatile development of nations and States. I am convinced that the present debate will make it possible to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action and specify methods of further activity without the need to alter the wording of the Programme.

The Government of the Republic of Poland is guided by the universal values contained in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development — Cairo '94 — in its efforts towards dynamic economic development and social transformations. Referring to these values and to its Constitution, Poland has undertaken complex social reforms. For the Polish nation, these undertakings are designed to tackle the tasks of the twenty-first century.

Demographic tendencies in Poland in the twenty-first century will bring challenges that should be met by our economy, which is still in the process of

transformation. They concern most of all conditions of family development and job security, the health condition of the population and the durability of intergenerational bonds in an ageing society. At present, we are experiencing a declining level of generational replacement. The population's process of ageing is mainly a result of the rapid drop in the fertility rate.

The health condition of Poland's population was addressed by the adoption of the National Health Programme. I would like to express profound gratitude to the United Nations Population Fund for the financial support that permitted Poland to start very important research programmes concerning health promotion through the educational system and the protection of the health of mother and child.

In 1999, the Government started the National Programme for Counteracting Drug Addiction and the National Programme for Preventing HIV Infection and Care for AIDS-Infected Persons. The Environment and Health strategic programme has adopted World Health Organization recommendations. A project of efficient management in the health service system has been implemented thanks to a World Bank loan.

In 1998, the Government of the Republic of Poland adopted a report on the situation of Polish families. It states unequivocally that only families can secure the optimal conditions for generational renewal and their biological, psychological and social development. The report says that the consolidation of the foundations of family functioning is the duty of the State.

The effort of working out and implementing a programme of State pro-family policy was undertaken on the basis of these premises. The effort embraces such issues as, first, creation of solutions strengthening the material foundation of family functioning; secondly, protection of motherhood, health of infants and children in the growing stage; thirdly, bringing up the young generation to respect the right to life as well as social human rights; fourthly, promotion of a culture of responsible procreation. These activities are already being implemented.

Women and mothers have a special role in the family. Women devoted to motherhood and family life should have the opportunity to realize their own social aspirations, and those choosing a professional career should have the possibility of squaring it with family life and motherhood. The equal rights of women and men are guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Poland. Non-governmental women's organizations have been operating on a broad scale.

Senior citizens can and should have a place in the family and society. We should therefore search for solutions that will allow us to preserve our society's intergenerational bonds and solidarity. We hope that the system of pension insurance currently being created in Poland will do its job in material terms: it has an element of saving for old age and therefore serves to help consolidate an attitude of financial prudence. Also, cultivation of family bonds will promote respect for senior citizens and ensure greater use of their experience and wisdom in social life.

A comprehensive, modern type of education that prepares for life and work in society is a prerequisite for the development of every human being and for the progress of civilization. The programmes and organizational reforms on which we have embarked, and the necessary increase in public spending, should enable us to educate our young people in secondary and higher education to levels already achieved in the European Union countries. These reforms are based on methods already being practised in Western countries.

Poland is becoming an increasingly attractive country for immigrants. Its international migration policy has been shaped in line with the relevant international conventions and agreements. Thus, Poland recently accepted a group of refugees from Kosovo to the limit of its capacity. The Constitution of the Republic of Poland makes provision for foreigners to enjoy political asylum there. The legislation regulating the various aspects of international migration will be further shaped with a view to Poland's acceding to the European Union.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that Poland's representatives participate actively in international forums on assessing implementation of the Programme of Action of the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development.

Poland is undertaking a number of programmes which, despite the difficulties of the transformation period, should accelerate the development of our country, and it counts on the continuing support of the United Nations in its endeavours. At the same time we declare our readiness to cooperate with the Organization in its quest for peace and prosperity in the world.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on Ms. Brigitte Zypries, Vice-Minister, Federal Ministry of the Interior of Germany.

Ms. Zypries (Germany): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated country Cyprus align themselves with this statement.

Let me first of all express our appreciation for the excellent work done by the Population Division under the leadership of Mr. Chamie, and for the great effort and dedication which has been invested in the review exercise by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) under the untiring guidance of Mrs. Sadik. Allow me also to add a word of heartfelt thanks to our excellent Chairman of the preparatory committee, Mr. Chowdhury, who led us through the difficult negotiations on the document containing the key future actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action. The European Union appreciates the hard and focused work and the spirit of cooperation and compromise of all concerned, and is convinced that the final product will bear witness to that work and spirit.

One of the major achievements of the consensus reached at Cairo in 1994 was and is the recognition that measures and policies concerning population issues have to be based on respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and must be oriented towards people's well-being. The concept of reproductive rights and reproductive and sexual health is based on this consensus and on the recognition that only free, responsible and informed decisions by human beings can be the keystone of and guidelines for government action in this field.

The European Union has noted with satisfaction that the Programme of Action has led to appropriate action in many countries, and that policies and programmes have been either newly introduced or changed to conform to the Cairo principles. Even though the concept of reproductive rights and reproductive and sexual health is by now firmly entrenched and widely acknowledged, much still needs to be done to create an environment that enables people, and in particular women and poor people, not only to make those free and informed choices but also to act on them.

The European Union's position in preparing for this special session has been forward-looking. The European Union is giving priority to stronger calling for action in the field of HIV/AIDS and strengthening the focus on, and meeting, the particular needs of adolescents for confidential and comprehensive services in sexual and reproductive health and sex education. It is giving priority also to calling for stronger action to reduce maternal mortality, and to achieve gender equality and equity. It is drawing attention also to the issues of migration and refugees, population ageing and resources to fund the necessary actions.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic developed in a much faster and much more dramatic way than could have been foreseen at the Cairo Conference. The death toll among young adults in their most productive years and on children, who are the future of every country, is appallingly high in too many countries: social and economic development in such countries is being severely jeopardized. Prevention of HIV infection is therefore urgently required. The key future actions proposed in this respect, particularly the targets of lower infection rates to be reached, are extremely pertinent.

Campaigns for the use of condoms, combined with sexual education, were quite successful and curbed the infection rate in countries of the European Union. Adolescents are particularly vulnerable to HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. Female adolescents are also being unnecessarily exposed to unwanted pregnancies, curtailing their prospects for good personal development. Their resort to abortion could be reduced if adolescents had information about and access to reproductive and sexual health services. Experience and knowledge acquired or rejected during adolescence are decisive for reproductive decisions in the future. Adolescents should therefore have full information on responsible sexual behaviour, equitable gender roles and family life. They should also have full access to reproductive and sexual health services with confidential and sympathetic counselling.

Making motherhood safe is essential for women's health and survival and for the survival of their children. Indeed, motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Increased efforts must be made to reduce the risks involved in pregnancy and delivery, which are alarmingly high in developing countries as compared to developed countries.

The achievement of gender equity and equality, empowerment of women and gender-sensitive male

attitudes remains an important priority for further action. In this context, the reproductive and sexual health and reproductive rights of women — while no longer disputed in principle — still need to be fully implemented. This presents one of the major challenges for future action. Also, it should not be forgotten that the Fourth World Conference on Women, in Beijing, built upon the Cairo Programme of Action and took the matter of women's rights to sexual self-determination and health yet further ahead. Let us therefore take these developments into account when proceeding in a truly integrated manner with the follow-up to Cairo and the other major United Nations conferences.

The European Union wishes to underline the importance it attaches to the sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights of migrants, internally displaced persons and refugees, with particular attention to the situation of women.

The growth in the number of older persons as a proportion of the overall population creates new challenges. Changing family structures and living arrangements will make it increasingly necessary to relieve families of the burden of being principal care providers for the elderly.

Governments have the responsibility to assign more importance to population and development issues. Political commitment has been identified as one of the factors for progress in implementing the Programme of Action. The mobilization of international resources, however, is needed to support the efforts of national Governments. The European Union urges that efforts be strengthened towards the fulfilment of the agreed official development assistance target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product and that the share of official development assistance for population assistance should be increased.

On 12 October of this year the world population will reach 6 billion. Decisive action by all concerned is needed to help us cope with the challenges confronting the global community in the approaching century. The Programme of Action recognizes the interlinkages and interdependencies existing between population, sustainable development, the empowerment of women and the eradication of poverty. We have been working in partnership towards these goals. The European Union is convinced that the success of Cairo can be repeated and that a successful, forward-looking outcome of the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly is possible through a spirit of common purpose and shared vision.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on Her Excellency Ms. Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, Vice-Minister of Social Security and Labour of Lithuania.

Ms. Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (Lithuania): Lithuania aligned itself with the statement made by Ms. Brigitte Zypries of Germany on behalf of the European Union. I would now like to introduce the Lithuanian perspective on the relevant issues.

The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme is of key importance to Governments, as well as to non-governmental organizations and individuals dealing with social development issues. In Lithuania, the goals and undertakings of this Programme are integrated into our Government's national strategy and are reflected in social policy objectives. Integration of the population and social development dimensions, such as securing equal opportunities for men and women, the availability of reproductive health care services and the strengthening of partnership with non-governmental organizations are urgent issues today which are important to every country.

Lithuania will follow the United Nations recommendations to organize its year 2000 population census. The census will be carried out in 2001 and will make it possible to collect precise data on the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the population.

In Lithuania, as in many other European countries, the ever-decreasing birth rate has a major influence on the ageing of the population and has become a very urgent issue. After the United Nations declared the year 1999 as the Year of Older Persons, Lithuania adopted the Programme of Action to deal with the main problems of senior citizens.

Considering the demographic tendencies of our country, the Government of Lithuania seeks to integrate demographic factors into social development strategies and all planning stages of resource distribution, in order to meet all the demands of citizens and to improve the quality of life of the present generation and of future generations.

Over recent years, Lithuania has been faced with a new challenge — increased migration. Therefore, one of our priority tasks is, on the one hand, to combat illegal migration and, on the other, to provide a legal and social basis for refugees and asylum seekers. A party to major

international instruments on migration, Lithuania has recently adopted a special programme on migration control prepared in accordance with the relevant European Union regulations.

Every effort is being made of late to develop the social budget model of the International Labour Organization, on which social expenditures are based. Retirement benefits, relief, employment, health and other expenditures should be included. This allows us to define a social security level that the country may achieve, as well as to forecast indicators, taking into consideration demographic and economic development to support the existing system. The results of this model may be used to make social policy decisions.

The elaboration of the concept of the Lithuanian family policy was started shortly after the Cairo Conference. The programme on family policy was adopted in 1996. The content of the programme was greatly influenced by the recommendations of the European Population Conference, held in Geneva, and by the Cairo Programme of Action.

Taking into account the principle of equal opportunities for both sexes, underlined in the Cairo Conference as a human right, the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania adopted the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in 1998. This law requires the establishment of an ombudsman to monitor equal opportunities for women and men.

Lithuania supports the goals formulated in the ICPD Programme, especially those aimed at decreasing the mortality rate among mothers, infants and children and at providing reproductive health care services and sexual education programmes. Lithuania is successfully implementing the Mother and Child Programme, focused on maternity and child health care. We agree with the provision of the Cairo Conference that abortion is not a method of family planning. Therefore, women attending women's consultation clinics are consulted on the issue and introduced to contraceptive means and methods.

In Lithuania, non-governmental organizations have an ever-increasing role in defending women's rights, dealing with family planning, children and youth issues and providing social services to senior citizens. The Law on Social Services, adopted in 1996, guarantees financial support from the State and municipalities for those non-governmental organizations. This approach is reflected in the Infrastructure Development Programme, which was initiated by the Ministry of Social Security and Labour of Lithuania and financed by the Government.

With Cairo Conference commitments in our minds, we should continue to search for ways to promote effective cooperation with municipalities, non-governmental organizations and other organizations. I believe that the coordination of actions, distribution of information and public support will ensure successful implementation of the Cairo Conference Programme of Action.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Martin Bartenstein, Federal Minister for the Environment, Youth and Family Affairs of Austria.

Mr. Bartenstein (Austria): Allow me, first of all, to align myself fully with the statement made this morning by Germany on behalf of the European Union.

One of the goals of the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development five years ago was to slow down the dynamics of population growth. This year will certainly see the global population mark cross the 6 billion threshold, but the median versions of United Nations projections suggest that this growth should come to a stop at the 10 billion mark by the end of the twenty-first century. While developing countries will experience a distinct abatement in their population growth, the population of industrialized countries will stagnate. In Europe, the population is expected to decline by 10 to 14 per cent by the year 2050.

Austria's population development more or less reflects that of other States members of the European Union. Its most outstanding feature is a steady growth in the number of older people. As a result, the age structure of our country is changing, and the ratio of over-60-year-olds to under-15-year-olds will shift from 1:1 today to 3:1 by 2030.

Austria has taken a number of measures in recent years to improve the social and economic conditions of families, further increasing the already high level of family benefits. Financial transfers such as the family allowance, and non-cash benefits such as free textbooks and free transport for school children amount to de facto benefits of 3,400 euros per family per year.

A concrete goal of great importance is the fight against maternal, infant and child mortality. Globally, infant and child mortality rates have been reduced by a third; in Austria a reduction of two thirds, to 4.8 per thousand, has actually been achieved. Austria therefore ranks among the top 10 countries worldwide with respect to the lowest child mortality rates. Similarly, Austria has an extremely low maternal mortality rate, of only four to six incidents among all deliveries per year.

A major instrument in the achievement of this success is the so-called mother-child passport, a preventive health care programme, free of charge, covering pregnancy from an early stage and continuing until the child turns four. The purpose of the "passport" is to diagnose high-risk pregnancies, to protect the mother and her unborn child and to identify childhood diseases or disabilities as early as possible.

Even though notable achievements could be made in combating infant mortality worldwide, pregnancy and childbirth still constitute an alarmingly high risk to the life of women in developing countries. Key activities in implementing the Cairo Programme of Action therefore have to include initiatives against maternal mortality. Sexual and reproductive health education, particularly for girls, should start at school age, and should be universally available. Reproductive medical care and services should be tightly focused on the importance of hygiene and assisted delivery by trained midwives.

In Austria, preventive approaches to sexual and reproductive health have been found to have very positive effects with regard to avoiding unwanted pregnancies and to protection against HIV and AIDS. Counseling services for adolescents are of critical importance in this regard. These services must focus on the use of condoms and other contraceptives, and even more so on responsible sexual behaviour and respect for the partner's rights and health, a message that needs to be spread particularly among young men.

It has been possible to curtail the spread of the HIV-AIDS virus in Austria. In recent years Austria has recorded a significant reduction in HIV rates. The incidence of new HIV-AIDS infections has declined rapidly, by almost two thirds since 1993, to a world-wide low of 1.1 cases per 100,000 inhabitants. But we have to look at the global picture: each year, 6 million people are newly infected by HIV-AIDS. We are painfully aware of the impact of HIV-AIDS on the social and economic development of many developing countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa; it is capable of reversing the development gains of recent decades. From our experience, we are convinced that any future prevention strategy against HIV-AIDS must give priority to education, particularly of adolescents, about the threat of HIV-AIDS, and must motivate them to use condoms.

Austria is concerned about the increase in the practice of trafficking in migrants, in particular women and children subjected to violence, forced labour or sexual exploitation. We have recently been experiencing a surge in these crimes following the refugee crisis in the Balkans. The international community should develop clear penalties for trafficking, backed by effective procedures and laws to prevent such crimes. In this context, I want to highlight the ongoing work of the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

Every year, 70 to 80 million women get pregnant against their will, 600,000 women die of the consequences of pregnancy and childbirth, and 80,000 women die as a result of unsafe abortions, facts which demonstrate the need for action at the global level. Such challenges surpass the solving capacities of States; they require joint efforts by the international community, developing and industrialized countries alike. Austria thus recognizes the need to increase the funds available for population and development programmes. In this regard, we will review the current level and use of funds for implementing the objectives of the Cairo Programme of Action with a view to increasing the emphasis on bilateral projects to promote sexual and reproductive health.

Projects, in cooperation with African and Pacific countries, are envisaged to concentrate on supporting women throughout pregnancy and childbirth, and on sex education for adolescents both in schools and in extracurricular programmes. Austria therefore supports the goal, as a key future action, of increasing the funding for reproductive health care programmes for adolescents.

In conclusion, let me point to the link among population, development and sustainability. The fight against poverty is important to check population dynamics, but also to sustain the ecological balance of our planet. The Rio and Cairo Conferences launched us on the road to meeting these crucial challenges. Five years on, we are able to highlight many important processes which have been initiated. The empowerment of women has proven to be an important and successful step in the right direction and is leading us to an

emerging human right: the right of all individuals to determine how many children they want to have and when they want to have them. Also in this context, it is important to bring the ongoing discussion on key future actions to a successful conclusion. Austria is prepared to make its contribution to ensure that this concept will come to full fruition.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Chairman of the delegation of Iraq, His Excellency Mr. Saeed Hasan.

Mr. Hasan (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): Permit me first, Sir, to say how pleased my delegation is to see you presiding over the work of the General Assembly at its twenty-first special session, on overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). We have every hope that your experience and wisdom will help make the work of this session a success.

The Programme of Action of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development marked the beginning of a new era in United Nations efforts to achieve sustainable development for all and to reaffirm the importance of human rights, including the right to development. Other major United Nations conferences held in the 1990s also bolstered the principles and objectives of the ICPD Programme of Action. Now more than ever we need careful follow-up, with a view to translating the recommendations of these conferences into concrete measures that can fulfil at least a minimum of the hope that the international community pinned on their results.

Regrettably, we are witnessing a reluctance by some developed countries and international institutions to do their share in implementing the ICPD Programme of Action. This harms the efforts of the developing countries, obstructing their attempts to establish a foundation that would allow for sustainable economic growth, the elimination of poverty and an increase in investment in the social sector, particularly in health, education and family planning. It takes two to tango, and efforts must be made by all — particularly the rich countries — if we are to achieve the desired objectives.

Iraq was one of the pioneers in adopting organized scientific planning to mobilize and develop human and financial resources so as to achieve sustainable economic growth aimed at bringing about the prosperity of human beings and at maintaining their right to their natural resources and their environmental rights.

I should like to provide several examples of our achievement. We have implemented a policy of free education at all levels, beginning with kindergarten and extending to doctoral studies, which includes the principles of compulsory primary education and combating illiteracy. That policy has been successful, and Iraq was given an award by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for its achievements in that respect.

We have implemented a policy of universal free health services, particularly for children and pregnant women. This has led to a significant decline in infant mortality and an increase in average life expectancy in Iraq and the elimination of most endemic and many contagious diseases. We are providing social care for the elderly, orphans, the disabled and poor families, as well as special care for the people of rural areas, including economic and social necessities aimed at limiting urban migration. Special care is being provided for women, opening paths to enable them to participate in all areas of life, including the political and scientific, and reaffirming their role in building society.

Women are occupying more important positions in everyday life, and the numbers of women participating in all economic, cultural, political, social and intellectual activities has increased significantly. Iraq has adopted many laws and administrative regulations that aim at providing equal and fair treatment for women with regard to both their rights and duties. The adoption in 1986 of a declaration of the right to development in all its forms signalled a new stage in the recognition of development as a basic human right. This right, however, has been obstructed by international and domestic obstacles. At the international level, those obstacles took the form of continuing policies that showed a lack of respect for the rights of peoples to self-determination and to sovereignty over their natural resources, in addition to other forms of interference in the internal affairs of States. They also took the form of policies obstructing the transfer of technology to third world countries, environmental problems and debt. At the national level, such obstacles took the form of illiteracy, disease and poverty, all caused by the lack of development.

In this context, I should like to shed light on a serious obstacle that has begun to become a phenomenon in the 1990s, at the beginning of the third millennium: the economic sanctions that are imposed on developing countries. The comprehensive economic sanctions imposed on Iraq are, perhaps, the most obvious example

of that. The sanctions have interrupted — indeed, destroyed — most of Iraq's plans for population and development.

I should like to provide some examples. The impact, direct or indirect, of those sanctions has had a cumulative effect that has led to the structural disruption of the cultural, social and economic fabric of the Iraqi people. Children were the first to suffer from those sanctions. Some 33 per cent of the children in Iraq are suffering from severe malnutrition, and according to statistics from the United Nations Children's Fund, 6,000 to 7,000 Iraqi children die monthly because of the lack of medicine and food. All the educational and vocational institutions have been paralysed, in full or in part, and more than 1 million students have dropped out of school, in addition to the fact that failure rates have risen dramatically. The health and environmental situation has deteriorated significantly, and this has had a severe impact on public health, particularly women of reproductive age, pregnant women, children and the elderly. To date, more than 1 million people have died because of the sanctions.

The role of women has also receded and the contribution of women to economic and social life has declined. The declining employment opportunities and the declining financial rewards have prompted many women to leave work. The escalating cost of living and the suffering has also resulted in a brain drain. The imposition of a comprehensive blockade against Iraq constitutes genocide and is a blatant violation of all human rights. Every day that passes without a solution being found adds to the moral, legal and human burden placed on the United Nations and the Member States. We hope that this special session will provide an opportunity to call for the lifting of sanctions, which not only impede development but collectively kill the human being, who is the object of such development.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the Chairman of the delegation of South Africa, Mr. Dumisani Kumalo.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): When the Cairo Programme of Action was adopted, our South African democracy was still in its infancy. Our leaders were new in office, but rich with ideas of what kind of society we wanted to build for ourselves. Over the past five years, we began to put life into the Cairo document. Our national plan for social development already incorporates the ideas that began in Cairo. The endorsement of the policies of our Government were clearly demonstrated at our recent second democratic elections, when more South African citizens affirmed their support for the Government than was the case during the historic 1994 election.

As we open this special session today, my Government is optimistic that the session will adopt a forward-looking and action-oriented document which will provide guidance on how to proceed in the further implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action. South Africa views the proposed key actions as pivotal to the national, regional and global population and development agendas.

Recognizing the inequalities that women have suffered, South Africa's Constitution embodies gender equality and the progressive implementation of basic social rights, such as access to education and health care, including reproductive health. It protects the individual's right to control his or her own body and it also includes freedom from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

South Africa strongly supports the objectives of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). However, we believe that it does not suffice to focus only on reproductive health and rights. In addition, we need to create enabling socio-economic conditions in which individuals may exercise their rights. Our social development programmes and macroeconomic growth policies aim to change the determinants of the country's population dynamics in such a way that these trends are consistent with the achievement of human-centred sustainable development and poverty alleviation.

My country remains a land of stark contrasts, of racially defined haves and have-nots, and of continuing gender inequality. Over the past five years, our agenda has been to remove structural barriers to full participation by the previously marginalized, to create equitable access to resources and services, especially for women and children, and to empower and enable them to achieve their full potential. In addition to numerous sectoral policies and legislation aimed at transforming the delivery system, South Africa is allocating nearly two thirds of its national budget to the social sector. The Government is providing free access for pregnant and lactating mothers and children under the age of six to all levels of health care. Particular actions by my Government, which are aimed at empowering women, include the improvement of women's access to credit, the removal of discriminatory customary legislation, and facilitating

women's involvement in small and medium-sized enterprises.

The latest census reflects a total population of about 40.5 million South Africans, of whom 44 per cent are below the age of 20 years. The proportion of teenage mothers remains unacceptably high at around 15 per cent. This clearly demonstrates the urgent need to address youth and adolescent reproductive and sexual health and sexual rights. South Africa is implementing its constitutional commitment to the individual's right to control his or her body. To this end, a life-skills and sexual education curriculum has been developed to be incorporated into the national school curriculum.

My country recognizes that unsafe abortion is a major public health hazard. As many as 44,000 women per year visited hospitals for treatment for the complications of unsafe abortions. In response to this, and in compliance with the constitutional right to reproductive health, my Government passed the Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act, which removes barriers to women's right to choose. To date, over 50,000 women have accessed safe termination of pregnancy services, which incorporate before-and-after counselling and post-termination contraception. Furthermore, maternal mortality has been declared a notifiable event in order to monitor and address preventable causes of death during pregnancy.

The southern African subregion has become the epicentre of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Certainly, the infection rate of 1,600 people a day in South Africa is among the highest in the world, with young people in general — women in particular — and the poor being most vulnerable. This is essentially a gender equality and rights issue. It brings the question of human rights into the terrain of sexuality, since one of the major causes is the lack of empowerment of women to negotiate safer sex and the frequency of violence within sexual relationships.

South Africa's demographic profile is expected to be severely affected by the HIV/AIDS onslaught, which will also have devastating socio-economic consequences. Having been recognized as more than just a health issue, the HIV/AIDS campaign is a national political priority, led by President Mbeki, and is aimed at changing behaviour and attitudes, beyond mere heightened awareness. A major stumbling block in addressing the impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic is the high cost of anti-AIDS drugs. This requires a commitment to addressing pricing structures by major multinational pharmaceutical companies, as well as the mobilization and provision of new and additional resources to assist developing countries to access medical interventions against HIV/AIDS.

South Africa and the rest of the developing world will face a number of challenges related to the population and development agenda in the twenty-first century. These challenges include the shortage of reliable population and development data and information, insufficient monitoring and evaluation systems for the implementation of the population policy, and inadequate technical skills for modelling and integrating population concerns into development planning and project design. In order to effectively address these challenges at the national level, we recognize the need for strong partnerships, which should include civil society, the private sector and the international donor community.

The Cairo Programme of Action already articulates a comprehensive approach to issues related to population and development. It identifies a range of demographic and social goals to be achieved over a 20-year period. South Africa believes that, by building on the success of Cairo and upon the progress already achieved, this special session should give further impetus to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and to securing the rights of adolescents to make informed choices about their sexuality and reproductive health. The successful implementation of the Programme of Action at all levels can only be to the benefit of all countries.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Francesco Paolo Fulci, Chairman of the delegation of Italy.

Mr. Fulci (Italy): I am taking the floor on behalf of the Italian Minister of Social Solidarity, Ms. Livia Turco, who was prevented from participating in this special session by urgent parliamentary engagements.

Allow me to begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your election as President of the General Assembly at the special session, and all the newly elected members of the Bureau.

Italy fully endorses the statement made by the head of the German delegation on behalf of the European Union and wishes only to add a few short comments from a national point of view.

First, since 1994 momentum has been building in the field of population and development, thanks to the

Cairo Conference and to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the personal efforts of its Executive Director, Dr. Nafis Sadik. Population is no longer seen as a purely demographic problem, but as an issue with economic and social dimensions. In Cairo, women became a central actor in the development process and in the control of population growth. Thanks also to the intensified activity of non-governmental organizations, there is an increased and widespread awareness of the problems of gender equality and the empowerment of women, which has contributed to a sharp downturn in demographic growth. Let me recall that the forthcoming high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council, at Geneva, will discuss the advancement and the empowerment of women in the framework of the role of work and employment in poverty eradication.

Second, population trends in Italy make the country unique. According to the latest United Nations Population Division estimates, Italy has the oldest population in the world. I hope there is a lot of wisdom too. In 1998 it had both the world's highest percentage of people aged 60 and older and the lowest of youths under the age of 15. Italian women and couples have one of the lowest fertility rates. Since 1975, a wide network of local counselling services has been available to provide advice and assistance on reproductive rights and health. In Italy there is a particularly low rate of teenage maternity and of children born out of wedlock. There is also a relatively low rate of divorce. At the same time, thanks to an effective national health-care system and specific legislation, the life expectancy in Italy is among the highest in the world; infant mortality is among the lowest; and maternal mortality is close to zero.

In the 1993-1999 period, the number of immigrants in Italy has nearly doubled, from 573,000 to 1,127,000, making up 2 per cent of the Italian population. In 1997 and 1998 Italy granted a total of 277,000 immigration visas. The problem of temporary asylum stretching into permanent residency has been exacerbated by recent events in the Balkans. In the past few years, new legislation has been enacted, most recently last year, to better manage immigration flows, assure immigrants' rights and responsibilities, foster integration and coexistence and promote a common European immigration policy. Italy actively supports the approval of the United Nations protocol on trafficking in immigrants.

While Italian women still lag somewhat behind some of their European counterparts in terms of presence in the political arena and of unequal gender distribution of work, particularly in care-giving, the situation is improving rapidly, especially for younger women, in the areas of education and employment.

Third, in response to these unique trends, the Italian Government has adopted a number of measures, at both the legislative and administrative level.

Fourth, at the international level, in 1999 Italy has significantly stepped up its contributions to UNFPA, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the World Health Organization and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS. This is supplemented by significant bilateral aid programs and contributions to the activities of Italian non-governmental organizations in this field. These include integrated programmes in various sectors, paying special attention to gender and women's empowerment policies; test projects, which have been particularly successful in setting up integrated counselling services for women and families; and direct action for the protection of children, women and disabled persons, particularly in Albania, and this well before the current crisis.

Fifth, Italy feels that the issue of the aging of the population will gain even greater significance in the years to come. The equally important issue of international migration and development should be addressed in international forums and at the United Nations to analyse the impact of immigration on both developed and developing countries. We also applaud UNFPA attention to the problems of youth.

Moreover, the Italian Government shares the concern over the tragic spread of HIV/AIDS, especially in many African countries. The United Nations system must, absolutely must, find a coordinated response to this epidemic, while donor countries need to provide adequate support for national programmes to fight this deadly scourge.

Much remains to be done. Throughout the world, maternal mortality needs to be lowered, reproductive health and rights guaranteed, the status of women strengthened and adequate assistance for refugees assured. Italy is deeply concerned by all of these questions. But we are confident that the United Nations system will continue its invaluable action through the rich analyses of world populations conducted by the Population Division and the UNFPA's precious action in promoting healthier trends in population and development.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the chairman of the delegation of Spain, Mr. Inocencio Arias.

Mr Arias (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for me to take the floor in this special session of the General Assembly.

Cairo +5 is part of a series of international conferences that constitute fundamental elements for the advancement and improvement of the situation of mankind, and particularly that of women, who in many instances suffer major discrimination based on their gender and on historic, social and cultural beliefs that undermine their possibilities to advance and their basic right to occupy their due place in all aspects of social life on an equal footing with men.

The importance of Cairo +5 has been underscored by the intensive preparatory process for this special session, which notably involved very active participation by civil society through non-governmental organizations and, specifically, many which represented adolescents, one of the main social groups that are beneficiaries of the Cairo Programme of Action.

Spain begins this process with two firm convictions. First, the Programme of Action has as its main objective strengthening the role of women and adolescents on the basis of recognition of their rights and freedoms in the field of health and reproductive rights, according priority to the proper exercise of those rights and to providing appropriate training and information, as well as making medical and health resources available to these communities so as to enable them to exercise their rights responsibly and safely.

Secondly, we need to view the Programme of Action from a comprehensive and future-oriented viewpoint. It must be comprehensive because, obviously, population is a fundamental phenomenon affected by all kinds of influences: level of development, level of resources, environment, the status of women, social, cultural and religious factors and the like. It is therefore of fundamental importance to focus on any population-related matters from an all-embracing perspective that takes into account the greatest possible number of factors — and the interactions between them — that affect population.

Our viewpoint must be future-oriented because the Programme of Action will obviously have to be informed by the experienced acquired as we implement it and by the changes that have occurred in international society in the past few years, whose effects, of course, will carry over into the next millennium.

In this connection, my delegation would like to highlight just some of the priorities for the next five years. First, we have to make definite progress in achieving gender equality in all areas. Secondly, we must ensure that adolescents have real access to suitable social and medical services in relation to their sexuality, while guaranteeing both confidentiality and respect for those adolescents' religious and cultural beliefs. Thirdly, we must increase our efforts to bring down maternal mortality rates, especially by preventing unwanted pregnancies. Also, we must ensure that abortion, where permitted by law, is carried out with the necessary medical, hygienic and psychological safeguards. Fourthly, we must step up measures to prevent the spread of AIDS, and we have to strive resolutely to find a cure for those suffering from that terrible disease. Fifthly, we have to react very strongly to the brutal sexual attacks that we have recently witnessed against refugee and displaced women, in Africa as well as in Europe, by giving clear priority to reproductive health measures and services in refugee camps.

Spain is aware that if the Programme of Action is to succeed and achieve the goals set out in the report of the Secretary-General, we must have sufficient financial resources. We therefore share the concern of others and we understand the alarm raised by the Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Mrs. Sadik, on the decline in the Fund's basic resources and the negative impact that decline would have, unless it is rectified, on the various national programmes supported by the Fund.

Despite the budgetary difficulties caused by the drop in official development assistance in the past few years, Spain has held its contribution to the Population Fund steady since 1995 and, bearing in mind the stimulus this special session has given the Cairo Programme of Action and the importance of the objectives we have set ourselves, Spain is studying the possibility of increasing its contribution to the Population Fund over the next few years.

Concerning voluntary terminations of pregnancy, which, as the final document of the Cairo Conference says so well, cannot be considered or used as a method of family planning, Spain's legislation governs those cases in which terminations are allowed and the grounds upon which terminations may be permitted in our

country. The Ministry of Health operates epidemiological and public health monitoring programmes covering women who undergo terminations and the conditions in which terminations take place so that they are performed in suitable conditions and with sufficient safeguards.

I should like now to refer to the activities of the Spanish International Cooperation Agency. As time is short, I shall just summarize the activities that the Agency carried out during 1998. Under the bilateral cooperation rubric, projects in various countries, begun in previous years and aimed at integrating women, improving maternal and child health and achieving integrated rural development, were continued. The Agency also carried out various programmes with the Population Fund in the Philippines and Algeria and is studying others, especially in Central America and Ibero-America, for the near future. At the same time, the Agency has contributed several million dollars to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), whose programmes target the female population as a priority, and held two meetings on co-financing, with non-governmental organizations, projects basically designed to advance the status of women in various countries around the world.

My delegation is aware that there is still much to be done at both the national and the international levels and that it is everyone's responsibility to make progress together until we achieve the objectives set in Cairo. I would echo the words of the representative of the Presidency of the European Union by stressing the idea that however population changes in the future, there is a need for decisive action on the part of all those with responsibilities in this area so that we can successfully surmount the challenges facing the international community in this field. In this connection, I would like to convey to you, Mr. President, Spain's commitment to being an active and responsible partner in the common effort to achieve these objectives.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Claude Bouah-Kamon, Chairman of the delegation of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Bouah-Kamon (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*) First of all, I must convey Mr. Thiam's regrets: our Minister of Planning and Development has been unable to shed his other commitments in order to be here this morning in New York. He has asked me to convey to you, Mr. President, his congratulations on your election as President of the General Assembly at this special session, which will undoubtedly be a success.

Mr. Semakula Kiwanuka (Uganda), Vice-President, took the Chair.

This mid-term review of the Cairo Conference gives me an opportunity to give a brief presentation before this Assembly of the population and development situation in Côte d'Ivoire and to sketch the outlines of Government policy in this area.

From 6.709 million in 1975, the Ivorian population reached 10.815 in 1988 and is now estimated at 15.5 million. With a mean annual rate of increase of 3.8 per cent between censuses, Côte d'Ivoire has one of the highest rates of growth in the world. The increase is associated with a high birth rate of 43 per thousand, a significant downturn in the death rate, from 28 per thousand in 1985 to 13 per thousand in 1994, and the considerable effect of immigration: in 1998, foreigners numbered 28 per cent of the total population.

If this rate of increase continues, Côte d'Ivoire will have a population of 22.3 million in 2008 and 27.5 million in 2015. The population will continue to be a young one because, up to 2015, children under 15 will make up over 48 per cent of the total population.

Côte d'Ivoire is a multiethnic and multicultural society whose socio-demographic dynamics are linked to the way the country has been economically, politically and administratively organized over the last three decades; a transethnic nation was promoted for harmony in human relations and national integration. In this society, the institution of the family is undergoing profound change: the traditional, extended family is becoming more nuclear, particular in urban settings, and the role of women remains preponderant.

In the economic sphere, the collapse in world agricultural prices in the context of a structurally weak economy gave rise to an economic crisis in the 1980s whose effects on the population's quality of life have been pronounced.

Despite the economic growth that began under the influence of the structural adjustment programmes combined with the devaluation of the CFA franc in 1994, the problems of survival experienced by poor and vulnerable households were aggravated and the harmful effects of the crisis have been very much felt in some social sectors — education, employment and health — and have to an extent compromised the major gains made in previous decades. In the past few years, Côte d'Ivoire

has got back on the growth track, with an annual growth rate of 7 per cent.

Our Government's strategy is based on withdrawing the State from production activities, developing the private sector and fighting poverty. From the political standpoint, with our State of law, the democratization of the media, decentralization and administrative regionalization and support for civil society, an important stage has been initiated in providing conditions for broader popular participation in the life of the country.

In response to the commitments undertaken in Cairo, in March 1997 Côte d'Ivoire adopted a national population policy that enjoys the technical and financial support of a number of institutions, including the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The national population policy has been designed as one of the main components of a societal project that our country aspires to carry out for its current and future generations. It seeks to improve living conditions, to balance demographic growth and socio-economic development and to preserve the environment.

The main objectives are the following: first, to reduce by the year 2000 general maternal and infantile morbidity and mortality rates and the incidence of sexually transmitted diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, by strengthening health care, in particular reproductive health care; secondly, to lower the overall fertility rate from 5.7 per cent to 4.5 per cent by the year 2005; thirdly, to control internal and international migratory movements by developing sustainable, profitable activities in people's places of origin in order to limit rural exodus and regional disparities; fourthly, to meet the requirement to provide equality in education, health, employment and food resources by making school enrolment obligatory up to the age of 15, particularly for girls; fifthly, to improve the economic, social and legal status of women and young people by rehabilitating the family, which is the intended beneficiary of all development efforts; sixthly, to promote qualitative development by maintaining living and environmental conditions by developing and implementing stricter guidelines for urban development and housing.

The seventh objective is to develop national capacities for planning and management in the area of data collection and of implementation and institutional coordination of population policies and programmes. Specifically, several sectoral plans have been developed and implemented by the Government through the relevant technical ministries: the national health development plan, within the Ministry of Health, the national environmental plan of action, within the Ministry of the Environment and the Forest, the plan of action for women, within the Ministry for the Family and the Promotion of Women, and the national plan of action to develop education and training, within the Ministry for National Education and Basic Training. The Ministry for Planning and Development Programming is responsible for coordinating national policy in poverty eradication.

The implementation of this policy is multisectoral. It requires the commitment of the governmental institutions, the non-governmental organizations and civil society. A dynamic partnership has been developed among the various actors concerned, in particular the non-governmental organizations, which play an important role in implementing all programmes from the design stage to execution.

All these actions were conducted within a well-defined institutional framework consisting of a National Population Council, which seeks to assist the Government in defining its population policy and in monitoring the implementation of certain activities within the framework of this policy. It also consists of a National Population Bureau, whose main responsibility is to formulate population policies and strategies, to develop a programme of action for population, to develop an investment programme for it, to coordinate advocacy, information, education and communication, to follow up and evaluate the programme's activities and, generally, to encourage implementation of the national population policy and to coordinate population activities.

As the Assembly can see, Côte d'Ivoire is resolutely committed, with the modest resources available to us at this difficult time, to take specific steps to translate the Cairo recommendations into reality. The Government of Côte d'Ivoire pins great hopes on these actions because it believes that ensuring the well-being and improving the living conditions of people is the ultimate goal of any development policy.

The Acting President: I now call on Mr. André Adam, Chairman of the delegation of Belgium.

Mr. Adam (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I wish to address the Assembly on behalf of Mr. Reginald Moreels, the Minister of Development Cooperation, who, unfortunately, is not able to be present today.

First, I would like to congratulate His Excellency Mr. Didier Opertti on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at this twenty-first special session.

I associate myself with the statement made by Ms. Brigitte Zypries, Vice-Minister of the Federal Ministry of the Interior of Germany, who spoke on behalf of the European Union. My country shares and fully supports the concerns and objectives that she stated. Belgium thanks Ambassador Anwarul Karim Chowdhury, Chairman of the preparatory committee, Mrs. Nafis Sadik, Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Mr. Chamie, head of the Population Division. Through their hard work, they did an excellent job for the Commission on Population and Development in preparing and guaranteeing the success of the five-year review of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), held in Cairo in 1994.

Since Cairo, many activities have been conducted upon the initiative of Member States in the more disadvantaged areas. Belgium has also sought to incorporate the resolutions of the ICPD in its domestic policies and in its new international cooperation policy. It is seeking to establish linkage between the actions defined in the major United Nations conferences that have been held in this decade with the major challenges of our societies: sustainable development, poverty and the status of women. We are mindful of observing human rights, which in the area of population should guide public choices.

Globally, in terms of population, definite progress has been made, but enormous challenges still lie ahead. Population growth seems to have slowed down even in countries where until recently fertility rates were high. However, it is still high, and the current population of 6 billion inhabitants could almost double before stabilizing around the year 2100. Urban populations will be larger than rural populations, which will cause inevitable and perhaps unforeseeable ecological repercussions.

Maternal mortality rates remain too high in many countries. Medical care before, during and after childbirth should be accompanied by family planning policies allowing couples to take free and responsible decisions and steps regarding their families, avoiding the need for illegal abortions. Belgium firmly supports gender equality, particularly in the area of sexuality and reproduction. Mindful of the well-being of women and children, we stress the importance of education, particularly for young girls and women.

A better-educated society will also be more open to intergenerational solidarity and to recognizing its multi-ethnic composition. This is essential in a world in which two major demographic trends are emerging: the ageing of our populations and an increase in international migration. Owing to decreasing birth rates and to the simultaneously increasing expectancy that people will live to old age, the percentage of elderly people in our populations is considerably increasing; at present this is true in Western countries, but it will soon be true in all countries. The necessary steps must be taken to guarantee that the elderly will have the resources they need and to provide the necessary assistance, especially in low-income countries. We must also develop a generalized social security system that will give the elderly access to medical and non-medical care.

Increasing migration, which in one way or another affects every region, requires an international approach to understanding the causes of this phenomenon and its social and economic effects, and to formulate solutions. Prevention is better than cure: to avoid conflicts, development projects must be conceived and employed in a preventive manner. We must also focus our attention on these two trends — ageing and migration — if we are to ensure a satisfactory quality of life for all inhabitants of the world, now and in the future, irrespective of their age.

I reiterate that Belgium remains a committed partner in implementing the Cairo Programme of Action. Since the Programme was launched, Belgium's voluntary contributions to the activities of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) have constantly increased. To this we must add the portion of our multilateral and bilateral budgets and of our subsidies to non-governmental organizations that is devoted to population and development, in particular reproductive health activities, including family planning and the fight against HIV-AIDS.

Another kind of useful activity, even though it is carried out at limited financial cost, is the holding of technical seminars such as those that my country has organized: in November 1997, in cooperation with the Population Division of the Secretariat, on health and

mortality; and in October 1998, in cooperation with UNFPA, on the ageing of the population. Undertaken on the initiative of national experts, these seminars enjoyed financial assistance from Belgian governmental bodies at the federal, regional and community level. We wish to continue these activities, especially to consider further the question of ageing.

I hope that this special session will provide an opportunity to give fresh impetus to development, international cooperation and the well-being of peoples, by encouraging ever-greater tolerance, freedom and justice.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.